



# Department of Justice

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## **HOGSETT ANNOUNCES THE TAKE DOWN OF MULTI-STATE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

INDIANAPOLIS - Joseph H. Hogsett, U.S. Attorney, today announced the dismantling of a criminal organization similar to those involved in the illegal importation and distribution of controlled substances—the only difference being that the product being imported and sold by this organization was the services of prostitutes.

The organization, which operated out of Indianapolis over the course of several years, was headed by three brothers who procured prostitutes, some of whom were smuggled into the United States from Mexico and Central America. Another group of individuals acted as managers of the locations where the prostitutes conducted business. The organization maintained and operated houses of prostitution in multiple states, including Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and caused the prostitutes to move between these houses on a near-weekly basis.

The organization operated primarily in the Hispanic community and advertised its services by distributing business cards bearing advertisements and telephone numbers for auto repair or western wear outfitters. These business cards were known within the Hispanic community as contact numbers for arranging appointments with prostitutes. Each such appointment, referred to as a "ticket", cost between \$40 and \$50.

The complaint charges sixteen defendants with having conspired to utilize interstate and/or foreign travel in aid of racketeering enterprises, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371.

The complaint alleges that the criminal organization was primarily controlled by brothers Jose Louis Hernandez-Castilla, Norberto Hernandez-Castilla, and Gregorio Hernandez-Castilla.

The complaint further alleges that the houses of prostitution were managed by Hector Elizalde-Hernandez, Javier Aguilera-Sanchez, Fredy Arnulfo Valle-Soto, Jorge Armando Rodriguez-Sanchez, Jose Mejia, Santos Nunez, and Elvin Herrera.

The arrests of these individuals are based on an investigation by multiple law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security (Homeland Security Investigations and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Enforcement and Removal), the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, the Marion County Sheriff's Department, the Addison, Illinois Police Department, and others.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bradley P. Shepard and Gayle Helart, who are prosecuting the case for the government, each of these defendants faces a maximum of 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. An initial hearing will be scheduled for each of the arrested defendants in Indianapolis, Indiana before a U.S. Magistrate Judge.

A complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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